



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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Special Olympics
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YEAR IN REVIEW

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**Making dreams
come true!**



**Special
Olympics**
Canada Foundation

address from the **CHAIR OF THE BOARD**

I am very pleased to have been appointed as the Chair of the Board for Special Olympics Ontario (SOO)! I look forward to having an active role in an organization that makes such a large difference in the lives of those with intellectual disabilities.

With over 23,000 athletes participating in communities across the province, Special Olympics is the world's largest movement dedicated to promoting respect, acceptance, inclusion, and dignity for people with an intellectual disability through participation in sports. We are more than just sport; we are dedicated to helping athletes live healthy, active lives. We provide health screenings, educate athletes about nutrition and healthy habits, and work to train healthcare professionals and students about the needs and care of people with an intellectual disability. Special Olympics also advocates for improved health policies and programs.

2017 marks the beginning of our new strategic plan – the goals, strategies, and targets we want to achieve for the next three years. Among these is building positive attitudes towards people with an intellectual disability. Through public relations and the engagement of celebrities and government officials, we will improve awareness of the Special Olympics movement, and what people with an intellectual disability can achieve. By maximizing the external impact of games and competitions, we will let more people see athletes competing, highlighting their abilities. We will also be working to improve opportunities for athletes by strengthening our focus on quality sports programming and coaching. We will broaden access to these programs by increasing the number of year-round opportunities to participate.

The Special Olympics movement has continued to grow and be ever more successful, which would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the competent board of directors, senior leadership team, staff, coaches, and over 11,000 registered volunteers. I want to extend a personal thanks to all of you who work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that programs run smoothly, and that athletes experience the joy, excitement, and personal fulfillment of participating.

Finally, I want to express my pride and admiration of every Special Olympics athlete. You work hard all year long, training rigorously to compete in the highest levels of competition. Your dedication and commitment inspires me, and it brings me such joy to see your excitement and enthusiasm when you participate in competition. I wish you the best in all your endeavors.

I hope that reading this report and seeing the accomplishments over the last year fills you with the same joy and respect that I feel. As you learn about the impact that this organization has had and the successes of participants, I hope that you are motivated to be even more involved, and to share this movement and its capacity with even more people. I look forward to having a front row seat to all that next year has to offer.



Chair of the Board

Jim Yaeck



address from the **PRESIDENT & CEO**

Each year I indicate how pleased and proud I am to present this Annual Report, showcasing the development and successes of Special Olympics Ontario during the last year. Having been around the movement for over 30 years - 28 of which as the President & CEO, the commitment and hard work of athletes, coaches, volunteers and staff never ceases to amaze me. This is highlighted and evidenced by their numerous achievements, which you will read about in this report.

As you learn a little more about our accomplishments, I hope that you will feel the excitement and joy that athletes feel as they participate in many sports programs throughout the year. They continue to dedicate themselves to living healthy lives and strengthening their skills, training hard to be able to compete in the highest levels of competition. They gain confidence in their abilities with each new success, and develop meaningful friendships with their team members and coaches. It truly warms my heart to see how enthusiastic athletes are when participating in sports, and how excited they get when they earn the opportunity to compete in major games. It is also very satisfying to interact with family members who witness firsthand the positive effect our programs have on the lives of the athletes.

I would like to extend a special thanks to all of our sponsors, partners, and donors! Without your consistent and reliable support, our programs would

not be possible. Your efforts do not go unnoticed, whether it's passionate fundraising, your own generous donations, or raising awareness of our organization and the individuals it helps. Every athlete who is able to experience the benefits of participating in a Special Olympics program is a direct result of your dedication. Especially notable is our partnership with the Law Enforcement Torch Run, the largest public awareness and grassroots fundraising organization for Special Olympics globally. The Law Enforcement community has supported our work for 35 years, working year-round to generate funds and raise awareness. We cannot express how thankful we are for their support, and the impact that it has made on our ability to attain our goals.

Please enjoy reading through this report and reflecting on the accomplishments of the past year. Every member of the Special Olympics' family is integral to our growth and our success, and you can take satisfaction in knowing that your contributions have had a meaningful impact on many lives. I sincerely hope that you will continue to be a part of this important movement for many years to come.



President & CEO,
Glenn MacDonell



OUR VISION & MISSION

Special Olympics Ontario believes that people with intellectual disabilities can, and will, succeed when given the opportunity to do so. Through the transformative power and joy of sport, we can help reveal the full potential of athletes with an intellectual disability.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is that sport will open hearts and minds towards people with intellectual disabilities and create inclusive communities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Special Olympics Ontario is dedicated to enriching the lives of Ontarians with intellectual disabilities through sport.

OUR VALUES

- ▶ **Empowerment:** We create opportunities to pursue full potential
- ▶ **Excellence:** We elevate standards and performance
- ▶ **Respect:** We operate in an environment of cooperation, collaboration and dignity
- ▶ **Diversity:** We honour what is unique in each individual
- ▶ **Inclusion:** We foster inclusive communities

For every dollar invested in Special Olympics community sport programs in Ontario, a minimum of seven dollars of social benefit is created through improved athlete physical and mental health, and increased athlete employment.

Our research tells us that, when compared with individuals with an intellectual disability who are not engaged in Special Olympics, our athletes experience the following health and lifestyle benefits:

- Improved lifespan and overall health for Special Olympics athletes
- 10% fewer athletes who are obese or overweight
- 20% fewer athletes with anxiety disorders when provided with access to sport
- 6% higher employment rate for Special Olympics athletes versus average individuals with an intellectual disability



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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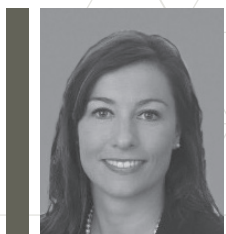
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Legislative Assembly of Ontario



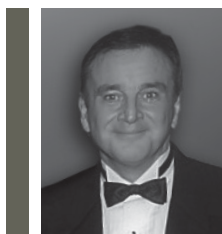
Tessa Trojan
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Athlete Speaker & Ambassador
for Special Olympics



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Special Olympics
Ontario



COMMUNITY REPORT

Ontario's Volunteer's Rock

Special Olympics Ontario is blessed to have over 11,000 volunteers who continue "to make it all happen". All across Ontario, volunteers find the time in their busy schedules to ensure that every Special Olympics athlete has the best sport program, competition, or overall experience possible. Volunteer commitment brought Special Olympics back to Fort Erie and Sarnia. Through the dedication of volunteers, hundreds of sport practices happen weekly without fail. The passion of Special Olympics Ontario volunteers not only guarantees our very existence today, but more importantly guarantees that Special Olympics will continue to grow and provide the highest quality sport training and competition for athletes with an intellectual disability, tomorrow and in the years ahead.

A photograph of three people, two men and one woman, smiling and giving thumbs up. They are wearing Special Olympics Ontario clothing. The woman in the center is wearing a red shirt with the Special Olympics logo and a white visor. The man on the left is wearing a purple shirt. The man on the right is wearing a purple shirt and a black cap. A red triangle graphic is in the top right corner of the photo.

**"The best way to find yourself
is to lose yourself in the service
of others." ~ Ghandi**



This year, Kelly Santini LLP **will be hosting their** 13th Ottawa Special Olympics Festival Breakfast. Their continued support through this event, as well as through their participation in many other local activities, is greatly appreciated by Special Olympics athletes, coaches, volunteers, and staff!

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HOCKEY FOR CHANGE

Scotiabank's Hockey for Hockey program continues to improve the lives of athletes with an intellectual disability, giving them the opportunity to enjoy the sport of floor hockey and to be involved in the growing community. Thank you for your continued enthusiasm and support, Scotiabank!



TWO DECADES PLUS!

For over 29 years, the Wizard Foundation continues to support the Special Olympics' movement and has made a lasting impact on thousands of lives. On behalf of athletes from across the province, thank you!



PARTNERS IN PLAY

The Partners in Play (PIP) initiative has continued strong growth over the past year, with over 40 partners now invested in the program. The benefits and opportunities that are provided to younger athletes within their community cannot be understated. Athletes continue to receive quality programs close to home in a supportive, caring environment. Clubs and organizations are realizing the impact that the partnerships are having within their community and have seen participation steadily grow. The skill, energy and enthusiasm displayed by Special Olympics athletes has a positive influence within the clubs.

Partners in Play, along with the Unionville-Milliken Soccer Club (UMSC) High 5 partner program, were recognized by the City of Markham for contribution to the betterment of the community. The UMSC program encourages fun and fitness while developing independence, self-confidence, and leadership skills. Participants are partnered with UMSC youth ambassadors to work on physical skill development leading to small game situations. This allows each athlete to participate in a program that is unique to them and their skill level, while parents have the opportunity to relax and watch their child develop their soccer skills.

Swimability Canada is another partner organization. It is a nation-wide network of not for profit university

student-run organizations providing one-on-one water safety and swimming instruction to children with disabilities. There are eight chapters in Ontario with more on the way. It is a wonderful opportunity for younger athletes to become comfortable in the water, and develop their swimming and life skills. This program not only connects university aged volunteers with young athletes, but introduces them to Special Olympics and the pathways available for their future development and careers.

The program will continue to strive to provide partners with the resources and assistance needed to develop programs for Special Olympics athletes. It has helped partners remove barriers and improve accessibility

while enhancing the outreach and engagement within the community. The appreciation of being a Special Olympics partner is evident when meeting with organizations. Volunteers and coaches have benefited from Special Olympics volunteer training modules, as well as participating in Special Olympics workshops to assist with coaching young athletes.

The partners, through their hard work, dedication and commitment make these programs a reality for athletes and they continue to show us that anything is possible.





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✦ Niagara Falls, Canada

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

School and community youth programs have seen a huge expansion over the past few years. Most recently, elementary school sports festivals have expanded to include more than 25 communities throughout Ontario. Last year, approximately 3,000 young athletes attended a sports festival and we are excited to see that number continue to grow! Sports festivals have also evolved to provide more ability-appropriate programming, allowing young athletes meaningful opportunities to develop their sport skills from a young age – the future of the Special Olympics movement!

Special Olympics has also made a concerted effort to engage students at some of Toronto's congregated schools for students with more severe needs. These schools work with students who struggle to engage in generic programming. As a result, we have collaborated with teachers to help us create an event better suited to their needs.

In communities across Ontario, we have begun to actively pursue organizational partnerships to ensure communities have access to meaningful and sustainable physical literacy programming. We are motivated to reach out to many communities and excited to see more organizations participate and help provide important physical literacy programming for youth with intellectual disabilities.

Special Olympics is particularly proud of its partnership with the Aboriginal Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario

(ASWCO). Together, we have identified strong similarities in the work carried out by both organizations with marginalized populations. This partnership speaks volumes to the dedication of the organizations to serve their population with more meaningful and creative programming.

Supporting younger athletes is an important priority. As the future of our organization, it is integral to our mission that we continue to expand opportunities for young athletes and families to learn about and engage with Special Olympics. Through partnerships, we have successfully increased our capacity to deliver meaningful and sustainable programs in both schools and communities. We look forward to yet another great year of youth program expansion and smiles!





A 50 KM swim across Lake Ontario, Special Olympics 50th birthday, and a goal to raise at least \$50K for the 2019 Special Olympics International Youth Games! We thank all supporters and particularly the swimmers from the bottom of our hearts: Whitney Black, Brendan Black, Reid Black, Nancy Black, Andy Desbarats, Jason Goliszek, John Gallagher, Paul Haffenden, Steph Manellis, Chris Rasmussen, James Robinson, Blair Robinson, Jade Scognamillo, and Colin Young. It was truly a unique and special way to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday!



Canada,

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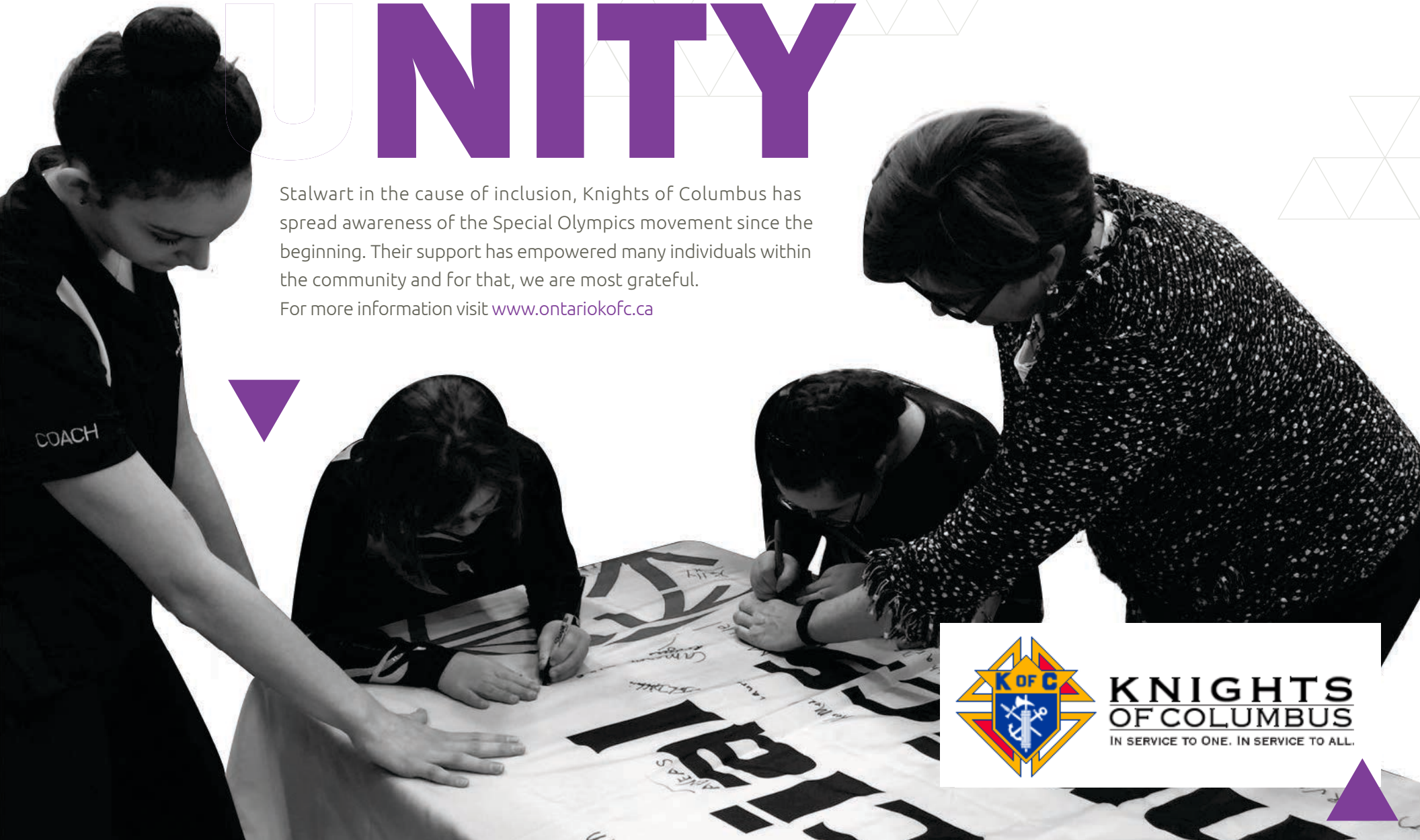
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FLAGS OF UNITY

Stalwart in the cause of inclusion, Knights of Columbus has spread awareness of the Special Olympics movement since the beginning. Their support has empowered many individuals within the community and for that, we are most grateful. For more information visit www.ontariokofc.ca



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SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIPS



The 2017 School Championships held June 12-14 in Niagara, capped off an incredible year for the school championships program, as more than 6,500 athletes age 13-21 competed in over 60 qualifying tournaments across the province in five sports; track and field, basketball, soccer, bocce, and floor hockey. The championships saw a turnout of over 700 athletes from three provinces, that were successful in qualifying from their respective region. Many wish the three-day event could have lasted longer, including an athlete from Notre Dame College Catholic High School (Welland). Sharon Phillips, (teacher from Notre Dame) recalls the moment: “at the dance [in Niagara], one of my students came up to me crying. I asked him why, and he said his heart was breaking because it was over.” She continued to say: “Our students loved the entire event from beginning to end!”

With a strong foundation of traditional sport and seeking opportunities to grow all facets of the school championships program, we chose to introduce unified sport into school championship events. Unified sports

joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team to train and compete. The results were staggering. Due to the success, school championships added unified divisions at nearly every qualifier hosted. Rock Aitchison (teacher) from Stamford Collegiate/E.L. Crossley Secondary School shares his thoughts on unified: “The new unified partner concept is the future of sports. It helps with student integration within our school [and] the partners who have come on board have truly loved the experience.”

Sharon Phillips echoed Rock’s message by stating: “Our school is one which prides itself on an inclusive environment for everyone, and unified sport highlighted how that translates to the real world. It was enlightening for our mainstream students to see the respect, determination, abilities, and joy of competing.”

As the original spark of school championships starts to turn into a flame across the province, we hope it

extends to other national and international programs. Aside from expansion, the program annually evaluates its current sports and growth opportunities. This past school year, badminton was introduced as a pilot sport. With growth from zero athletes to over 400, this coming year will see implementation of eight badminton skills clinics across the province.

In 2018, school championships plans to increase the number of events in new communities and build on the existing success and support from current locations. School championships will offer the opportunity in 2018 for athletes to participate in single day trial events, which will allow them to learn and develop skills in badminton and softball. We also plan to build on unified sports inaugural season, promoting the inclusivity of sport. We look forward to another incredible school championships season, as athletes compete for the opportunity to qualify for the 2018 Provincial School Championships in Peterborough, May 29-31.



LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Address from the Chair

It is with great pride that I report on another year of tremendous achievement for the Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run (OLETR). The OLETR represents an enduring partnership between Law Enforcement agencies and Special Olympics Ontario, over a rich and inspiring 30 year history.

Dedicated men and women across Ontario collaborate daily in the pursuit of safer communities, and through the OLETR raise funds and awareness for over 23,000 Special Olympics Ontario athletes. This continuous commitment is instrumental in providing sustained sport programs and competitions across the province. The impact of annual, local OLETR activities for Special Olympics transcends the significance of fundraising alone and serves to galvanize whole communities in support of courageous athletes. From the leadership of Law Enforcement personnel and the annual Torch Run, community volunteers are inspired to coach, donate, and participate in Special Olympics programs. This influence is critical for the ongoing success and development of the athletes as they seek to grow and enrich their lives.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) Torch Run Executive Committee is dedicated to working with all partners in the pursuit of a strong OLETR program for Special Olympics. Continued success will build from the foundation of the hard work and experience of over 30 years of dedicated service of Law Enforcement personnel. This legacy, coupled with a collaborative approach of sharing ideas and continuous planning, will ensure the sustained growth of OLETR.

The OACP recognizes and commends all Law Enforcement personnel who selflessly give their time and energy as participants and champions of the Torch Runs in the communities they serve. On behalf of the OACP Torch Run Executive Committee, I sincerely thank all of the men and women in Law Enforcement who volunteer in so many capacities on behalf of the OLETR for Special Olympics.

Andrew Fletcher

Chief of Police, South Simcoe Police Service

Torch Run 2017

The Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics has completed another successful year, thanks to the tireless support and dedication from Law Enforcement agencies and officers from across the province. As we celebrate our 30th Anniversary, the Law Enforcement Torch Run continues to be the pinnacle fundraiser for Special Olympics Ontario.

Peel Regional Police hosted the 2017 Provincial Summer Games, which were a tremendous success! Over 200 Law Enforcement officers from across the province ran with the Flame of Hope into the opening ceremony to officially open the games!

Thank you to S/Sgt Kevin MacBean and his dedicated team of volunteers who organized an incredible Final Leg! At the closing ceremony, the torch was officially passed to Sault Ste Marie Police Service who will host the 2019 Special Olympics Ontario Provincial Winter Games.

Niagara Regional Police partnered with Special Olympics Ontario and hosted the 2017 School Championships from June 12-14. The school championships program uniquely provides competition opportunities for students aged 13-21 with an intellectual disability to advance in the sports of track & field, bocce, soccer, and basketball. In total, 64 regional qualifiers took place across Ontario leading into the School Championships in Niagara. Local Law Enforcement participated in 95% of the qualifiers and remain the highlight of the athletes' experiences! Peterborough Police Service will proudly host the 2018 School Championships and add to this incredible legacy of local Law Enforcement hosting major games on behalf of Special Olympics.

Traditionally, the Torch Run has been driven by grassroots fundraising in the spring and summer months and as much as this trend still exists, we have seen tremendous growth in revenue throughout the calendar year. In the cold winter months, the polar plunge program grew to 16 plunges and raised an astonishing \$335,000 for Special Olympics. We anticipate over 20 plunges in 2018 so stay tuned as we continue to be #FreezinForAReason.

Torch Run also had tremendous growth in the Guardians of the Flame Endurance Series program. The series featured five events provincially this summer. Each event was designed to push participants to their physical limits, and to create an environment for participants to have fun while raising funds for Special Olympics! In total over \$250,000 was raised, bringing the three year total to \$580,000 raised for Special Olympics.

2016 also marked the first year in which the Truck Convoy for Special Olympics hosted two events, (Paris and Brampton). The 13th Annual Paris Convoy raised \$67,000 with 73 trucks and the 1st Annual GTA Truck Convoy raised \$17,000 with 29 trucks. Sincere thanks to our amazing partners in the trucking industry who helped us raise such a substantial amount.

Each year, the Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run recognizes officers who have made significant contributions to the movement. This year, the Award of Honour and the Distinguished Service Award were presented at the OACP Conference in Kitchener, Ontario on June 19. We are pleased to congratulate the following recipients:

Distinguished Service Award:

Kevin MacBean - Peel Regional Police Service
Carole French - Quinte Detention Centre

Award of Honour:

Keith Nutley - Ministry of Natural Resources
Charles Hawes - Joyceville Institution
Michael Puterbaugh - Toronto Police Service
Leslie Koski - Toronto Police Service
Bonnie Dominey - Windsor Police Service

Presentations were also made to Chief Al Frederick and S/Sgt Kevin MacBean, whose terms expired for: Chair of the OACP Torch Run Executive Committee and Provincial Director, respectively.

Incoming members are:

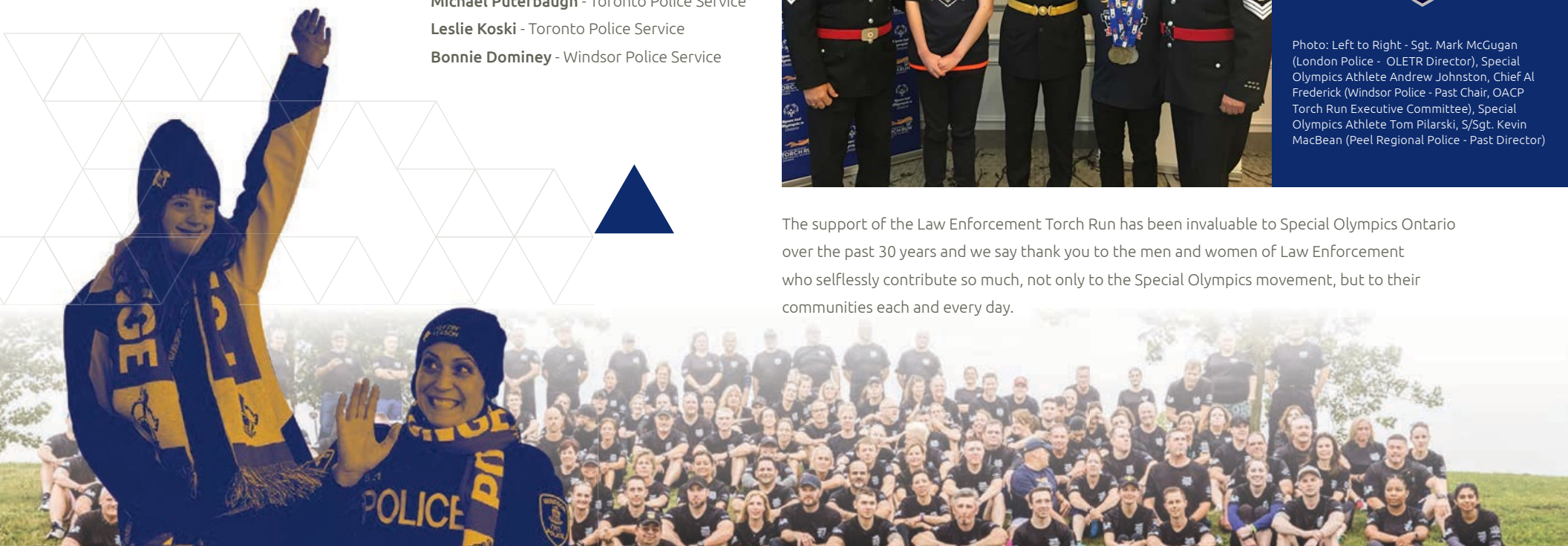
Chief Andrew Fletcher - South Simcoe Police Service Chair, OACP Torch Run Executive Committee
Sgt. Mark McGugan - London Police Service, Provincial Director, Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run

Welcome Chief Fletcher and Sgt. McGugan! Torch Run Ontario is forever indebted to Chief Frederick and S/Sgt. MacBean for the tremendous work they completed on behalf of the charity over the past few years. During their leadership the program improved exponentially, and continually raised more funds and awareness for Special Olympics year-over-year. The framework remaining is steadfast and strong, and this succession planning is a key reason why Torch Run Ontario continues to be one of the top programs in the world.



Photo: Left to Right - Sgt. Mark McGugan (London Police - OLETR Director), Special Olympics Athlete Andrew Johnston, Chief Al Frederick (Windsor Police - Past Chair, OACP Torch Run Executive Committee), Special Olympics Athlete Tom Pilarski, S/Sgt. Kevin MacBean (Peel Regional Police - Past Director)

The support of the Law Enforcement Torch Run has been invaluable to Special Olympics Ontario over the past 30 years and we say thank you to the men and women of Law Enforcement who selflessly contribute so much, not only to the Special Olympics movement, but to their communities each and every day.



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HEALTHY PROGRAMS

Healthy Athletes

Healthy Athletes provided over 1,700 health screenings in seven different communities across the province during the 2016-2017 year. This included Kingston at the annual basketball classic, in Barrie at a 5 and 10 pin bowling tournament, and at spring games in Thunder Bay. Training on healthcare for people with intellectual disabilities was provided to over 200 current and future health professionals. Although we offered the program at our more traditional, larger scale events like the provincial summer games and school championships, we also remain focused on providing the program at more local based competitions to ensure that we engage as many new athletes as possible.

"The Healthy Athletes program was fantastic. Thank you so much for bringing it to our

community. There was so much useful information and the health professionals who volunteered were wonderful and so patient with the athletes. We look forward to participating in the program again."

~ Parent of Special Olympics athlete

Healthy Communities

It is important to take the next step to ensure a level of inclusive health for people with intellectual disabilities.

Although linked to the Healthy Athletes program, Healthy Communities is a broader, systems level approach. The initiative looks to foster a network of healthcare providers and organizations throughout the province who are knowledgeable and understand how to treat and engage with people who have intellectual disabilities. The goal is to connect athletes

to local healthcare providers and resources in the communities in which they live, to improve their health. During a Healthy Athletes event in Thunder Bay, local optometrists volunteered during the screening. Athletes who participated in the screening, but didn't have an optometrist, were connected with the local optometrists who volunteered to ensure continuity of care. We are very excited about the future of healthy communities and adding to the growing network of health professionals and organizations.



Dr. Joe Valente (left) and Dr. Brad Elgie (right) of Harbourview Optometry in Thunder Bay, ON, with a Special Olympics athlete receiving his new glasses through the new Healthy Communities initiative.

"The leadership course was very useful for so many reasons. It gave athletes the opportunity to meet athletes from other communities. It was one of the best workshops I have attended. The group work gave the athletes the opportunity to plan and come up with ideas together. The excellent format for speech writing enabled my daughter to independently write a great speech. As a result of this workshop, she was inspired to continue her public speaking. Well DONE!" ~ Karen Romualdi, Mother of Special Olympics Athlete & ALPs Graduate.

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Special Olympics is much more than sport. The Athlete Leadership Program (ALPS) trains athletes to become advocates for themselves, their peers and the Special Olympics movement. Training is provided to athletes in three core modules: social media and governance, healthy lifestyles, and speakers training. During the 2016/2017 year, Special Olympics Ontario successfully offered eight different workshops, training over 80 new athlete leaders across the province. In addition, more athletes were trained as co-facilitators to assist with teaching the modules of ALPs, an initiative that was very well received. We look forward to expanding this approach in the future.

A special thanks to ClubLink for their continued support in facilitating the Healthy Athletes program and creating opportunities for life long health and fitness for Special Olympics athletes!

CLUBLINK
ONE MEMBERSHIP
more golf



Together, Special Olympics Canada and the Sobeys Inc. Better Food Fund are providing thousands of Canadians with intellectual disabilities, as well as their families, caregivers and coaches, access to nutrition guides, cooking classes and fresh, accessible food.

More than 100 Sobeys Inc. employees across the country have signed up to lead Better Food Nutrition Sessions where athletes, coaches, volunteers and caregivers will learn how to incorporate better food into their lifestyle.

Together we will help over 40,000 Canadians with intellectual disabilities and their loved ones to "Eat Better, Feel Better and Do Better."

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The “**Special Supporter Golf Series**” provides golf tournaments with a “**Hole-in-One**” program that brings added **VALUE** and **EXCITEMENT** to their event. By making a donation to Special Olympics Ontario, your event will receive the services of this program for **FREE**, plus you will receive an invitation to play in a special “**Tournament of Champions**” golf event held each year at a prestigious ClubLink facility. This year’s event took place on Monday, October 2nd at The Country Club in Woodbridge.

**To learn more about this program,
visit: www.goforthegreen.ca**



**For more information, contact
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COACH & DEVELOPMENT

Coaches' Corner

It is no secret to anyone that the best trained coaches help Special Olympics athletes reach their personal and sport performance goals more effectively. Throughout 2017, Special Olympics delivered 25 sport specific coaching clinics spanning 11 different sports across the province of Ontario. Each clinic was facilitated by a sport expert. Coaches enjoyed a first hand opportunity to spend time in the classroom and at their respective sport venues learning valuable skills and techniques from industry leaders.

March 3rd - 5th saw over 200 Ontario coaches and educators come together at Camp Muskoka for the Special Olympics Ontario Sport Summit. Coaches and educators shared their successes, provided feedback on challenges, and offered valuable input. The legacy of continued learning and knowledge gained is the best measure of success!

"A coach is someone who tells you what you don't want to hear, and has you see what you don't want to see, so you can be who you have always known you could be." ~ Tom Landry

MAJOR GAMES

“Reaching Up, Reaching Out Together”

The 2017 Provincial Summer Games were held in Peel Region from July 13 - 16th, hosted by Peel Regional Police Service, with A/Staff Sergeant Debbie Pendlebury overseeing the role of Games Manager and leading a team of 600 volunteers to make this an unforgettable event.

744 athletes and 260 coaches from across the province attended and competed in athletics, bocce, golf, soccer, and softball. The games also played host to over 1,300 families and friends who did an amazing job cheering on athletes all weekend.

An added element to the provincial games was the opportunity to host the first Canadian Women’s Soccer Festival on July 14th. Teams from Alberta, Quebec, and three teams from Ontario competed in an invitational tournament to celebrate the power of women. The female athletes joined the district teams at the closing ceremony and athlete victory party to close out the tournament.

Many memories were made throughout the weekend: athletes dancing to Abbamania at the opening ceremony; healthy athlete screenings at several sport venues; Pinball Clemens and Don Cherry bidding farewell to the teams at the closing ceremony; and of course the music and dancing at the very popular athlete victory party!

Congratulations to all athletes and coaches who were selected to represent their districts at the provincial games and good luck to those athletes and coaches who qualified as members of Team Ontario to compete at the 2018 National Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia.





2017 Canada Summer Games

Congratulations to the following athletes and coaches who represented Ontario at the 2017 Canada Games:

Athletics:

Kristy Alford, Innisfil; Desiree Allan, Orillia; Gaerrisen Freeland, Havelock; Eric Pomery, Kitchener; and Coach Alison Rumbal, Newmarket

Swimming:

Kayla Marwick, Haileybury; Desiree Pennells, Lisle; Gohulan Rajalingam, Toronto; Gael Shindano, Ottawa; and Coach Lloyd Brown, Aurora

Special Olympics athletes were on fire with four gold, three silver, and two bronze medals, to help Ontario capture the Canada games flag!

Canada games are extremely important for the development of high performance athletes. Partnerships with Athletics Ontario and Swim Ontario ensure that Special Olympics athletes are provided with advanced training principles and techniques that may not be available in their home communities. We are very proud of the athletes and coaches who were selected - congratulations to everyone on their many achievements.

2017 World Winter Games "Heartbeat for the World"

In 2017, Austria played host to the World Winter Games (March 14 – 25th). Team Canada consisted of 148 team members, 46 of whom were from Ontario. There were many highlights from these incredible games, including the warm welcome in Wiener Neustadt (host town prior to the games), the colorful opening ceremony in Schladming, and the amazing hospitality of the Austrian people.

We are particularly proud of Ontario figure skater, Sara McKelvie, who was ranked fourth in the compulsory competition (singles), and came back to win gold in the free dance. Well done!

Everyone gave 100% of themselves in their respective sport for the year leading up to world games and it showed! Similar to Sara, many athletes had amazing performances and represented their country, their province and their community with great pride. Team Canada won a total of 117 medals – how great is that?



SPECIAL OLYMPICS
WORLD WINTER GAMES
AUSTRIA 2017
Graz | Schladming | Ramsau | Styria
Heartbeat for the world



This year marks the 10th year partnership with VIA Rail Canada. Thank you for your continued support and providing safe travels for Special Olympics athletes, coaches and families.



PROVINCIAL AWARDS



2017

TEAM OF THE YEAR

Timmins Soccer Team

The Timmins soccer team truly represents the meaning of the term “team”. They have been together for 16 years, and they constantly give their best. They play well together, get along well with each other, and always look for ways to help each other improve.

If Torch Run or any other Special Olympics functions are in town, the Timmins soccer team will always be there to assist, displaying their commitment and dedication. They also involve themselves with school and community groups outside of Special Olympics.

In 2010 this team exemplified the true spirit of

Special Olympics when they competed at the national games in London. They were up by 15 points and decided to stop making goals so that the other team could catch up. As a result, they lost the gold medal, but they were so pleased and happy for the other team. When they attended the national games in British Columbia in 2014, they met up with that same opposing team, and they remembered each other! They all shared hugs and high fives, representing what Special Olympics is really about.

In terms of sportsmanship, the Timmins soccer team always says thank you to the coaches and volunteers, and they are the first to shake the

hands of officials. They are well behaved and well mannered. They are also the first to assist a fellow athlete in any way they can. The players show amazing leadership skills, and members are excellent mentors. The team is made up of various skilled players from levels C to A, and they play extremely well together. They also assist the lower division team during practices, and cheer them on during games.

Congratulations to the Timmins soccer team on being presented with the 2017 Team of the Year Award.



2017

SCHOOL TEAM OF THE YEAR

Cardinal Newman Team

The Cardinal Newman soccer team represented their school proudly at the 2017 School Championships bringing home gold in their division. Attending the games for the first time, the team was supported by a large fan base from their school, who were on hand to witness a winning goal late in overtime of the gold medal game! Team members Chasson McKerracher, Michael Di Pietro, Caleb Baxter, Nicholas Pontillo, Nicholas Morel and Evan Plesa were coached by Gerry Moretuzzo and Dan Mazzuca.

“What an unbelievable experience to say the least,” Moretuzzo said in an email. “In my over 30 years of coaching, I cannot say I was ever more

thrilled to be part of a team and event. Winning the gold medal with our team, of course, was the highlight, but recognizing the competitive spirit that exists in all athletes was truly remarkable.”

Stellar goaltending by captain Nicholas Morel throughout the tourney was a key factor, Moretuzzo said, especially in the final. Morel made a big save on a breakaway late in the game to keep things close. Midfielders Evan Plesa, Caleb Baxter and Chasson McKerracher solidified the centre of the field, working tirelessly and making timely passes. Nicholas Pontillo also had a strong tournament, playing both forward and defence.

Moretuzzo also went on to express how special it is for the athletes to be recognized by the other students at Cardinal Newman, saying “... the students showered our Special Olympics athletes with so much praise and support. We are a provincial contender in so many sports in our school and for our special needs students to experience that same feeling is fantastic!”

Congratulations Cardinal Newman soccer team on being named the 2017 School Team of the Year.



2017

FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Valerie Nyhout

This award is given to an individual who performs exemplary acts of true sportsmanship, participation and personal development. Valerie Nyhout is an athlete of tremendous dedication and commitment, which can be seen in her 13 year career with Special Olympics. She represents Special Olympics Ontario as an ambassador in her hometown of London, and does a truly wonderful job.

Valerie has participated in numerous sports, such as alpine skiing, cross country skiing, rhythmic gymnastics, basketball, golf, indoor and outdoor soccer, and athletics. She does whatever it takes to improve her skills, making her a role model and mentor amongst her peers. She is also an amazing

spokesperson, representing Special Olympics in a positive and professional manner.

Her greatest achievement yet is her recent success in alpine skiing. She trained extremely hard and earned a position as a member of Team Canada at the 2017 World Winter Games, where she won a silver medal. Additionally, she earned bronze, silver, and gold medals at the 2016 National Winter Games in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland.

Valerie is an individual of pure dedication and talent. In order to become a better athlete, she has made changes to her everyday life, displaying her commitment to sport. She follows all physical

and dietary recommendations from her coaches and takes them to heart. Valerie prides herself on her personal development, and has added three extensive physical workouts a week to her schedule. She is cheerful, enthusiastic, and focused on the bigger picture not only for herself but also for Special Olympics as a movement.

Congratulations Valerie on being presented with the 2017 Female Athlete of the Year Award.



2017

MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Jack Fan

Special Olympics values athletes who demonstrate genuine sportsmanship, strive to do their personal best, work hard to achieve their athletic goals, and continuously involve themselves in sports throughout the year. Athlete Jack Fan best defines these factors through his personality and skill set. Jack not only puts forth effort to excel as an athlete, but also as an engaged and active member of his community.

For more than 10 years, Jack has participated in various sports such as figure skating, swimming, and athletics. He is a dedicated and devoted athlete who will always try again if he makes a mistake, and wants to improve and learn from his weaknesses. When it was announced that he

would be a member of Team Canada for figure skating at the 2017 World Winter Games, he increased his training at the rink to five days a week, displaying excellent work ethic and focus. At the games he moved up levels in both singles and dance, requiring him to learn new routines – and won gold in both events. This definitely shows how goal oriented and focused Jack is!

Jack has attended a number of major games, including the 2016 National Winter Games in Corner Brook, where he won two gold medals and one bronze. He also won several gold and bronze medals for swimming at the 2016 Provincial Spring Games in Guelph.

Jack always pushes himself to try new things and set new limits. He listens to his coach attentively and always has a big smile on his face when he competes. He is an extremely hard worker and is a role model to many young athletes who proudly watch and learn from him.

Congratulations Jack on being presented with the 2017 Male Athlete of the Year Award.

PROVINCIAL AWARDS



2017

SCHOOL ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Gohulan Rajalingam

The School Athlete of the Year award is presented to an individual who exhibits excellent sportsmanship, commitment, and continuous personal development. Gohulan Rajalingam displays all of these characteristics, as an amazing and self-driven athlete who strives for success and is an inspiration to his family, peers, and community.

Gohulan has accomplished much during his experience with Special Olympics. In February 2016 he represented Canada at the NBA Cares/ Special Olympics unified basketball game. As a result he was featured in Sole Shift Magazine. In June 2016, Variety Village named him Top Athlete of the Year for his outstanding performance and

personal achievement in swimming.

Gohulan won a silver medal in floor hockey at the 2016 Special Olympics National Winter Games, and three gold medals in track and field at the 2016 School Championships. He also won four gold medals at the 2017 International Defi Sportif Alterego swim competition in Montreal. These are just a few on his long list of achievements.

Gohulan acts as a mentor for others and is well-liked and respected by all. He shows respect for his fellow teammates, coaches, and officials, and has exemplified the true spirit of Special Olympics by being a High 5 athlete ambassador.

Gohulan participates in many sports, including swimming, basketball, soccer, floor hockey, softball, track, 10-pin bowling, badminton and tennis. He has demonstrated tremendous improvement in athletic skill through daily workouts and dedicating himself to an extremely healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, he is very goal oriented and competitive, ensuring that he always does his best at practices, tournaments, and competitions, showing his true dedication and commitment to sports. He works hard to achieve his personal goals and continually improve.

Congratulations Gohulan on being presented with the 2017 School Athlete of the Year Award.



2017

ATHLETE LIFETIME AWARD

Steve Caban

The Athlete Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who values and embodies traits such as leadership, hard work, sportsmanship, passion, and dedication. These factors are exhibited through the personality and actions of athlete Steve Caban. He has been involved with Special Olympics since 1996, and for more than 20 years, he has never failed to give 100% effort in any sport he participates in.

Steve has excelled in many sports such as nordic skiing, swimming, soccer, floor hockey, 10-pin bowling, and softball. He is respected and well-liked by others, as he himself shows respect to his team members, coaches, and officials. Steve

is always appreciative of his coaches, who are honoured to have him as a member of their team. He constantly seeks to improve his techniques and find ways to become a better player, and has achieved great personal development.

Due to his outstanding skills, he has been able to participate in several national games and four world games. Steve's involvement with Team Ontario exemplifies his versatility in sports and excellence in competition. He has received numerous gold, silver, and bronze medals from different competitions, as a result of his excellent focus and drive for achievement.

Steve is truly an inspiration to others, as he takes pride in his accomplishments but still remains humble. He not only celebrates his own achievements, but those of his team members, demonstrating amazing sportsmanship. He displays exceptional leadership skills, and always lends a helping hand to those who require additional assistance. Steve presents extraordinary dedication to his sports, remaining a true inspiration to his peers.

Congratulations to Steve on being presented with the 2017 Athlete Lifetime Achievement Award.



2017

**FEMALE COACH
OF THE YEAR**
Rachel Mathews

A great deal of an athlete's success derives from the efforts and influence of a coach who guides them to greatness. Coach Rachel Mathews is proof of that. She has been involved with Special Olympics sports programs for over 18 years. She is a true leader, and is loved and appreciated by all her athletes, fellow coaches, and volunteers throughout the community. She is always ready to lend a helping hand, and exhibits true sportsmanship in everything she does.

She has attended 13 provincial games and five national games, representing athletics, bowling, soccer, and snowshoeing. She places a great amount of effort into educating athletes with her

previous experiences and first-hand knowledge of sports. Rachel has had a wide range of experiences in a variety of positions, such as Regional Team Manager, Provincial Team Liaison, Mission Staff, Sport Technical Liaison, and Head Coach. She is extremely knowledgeable in her sports, leading training sessions and providing new coaches with helpful advice and tips. She shares her knowledge with them on how to train, interact with, and encourage the athletes in a comfortable and friendly environment. She also takes the time and responsibility to support volunteers and parents.

Rachel is an excellent coach who understands the potential of every athlete and works hard to assist

them as they strive for excellence. She has a clear understanding of what it is like to work with varying levels of ability, highlighting her expertise in the field. She ensures that athletes push themselves to reach new heights and opportunities.

Congratulations Rachel on being presented with the 2017 Female Coach of the Year Award.



2017

**MALE COACH
OF THE YEAR**
Taylor Ablitt

The success of Special Olympics athletes is a direct result of coaches who support and provide them with guidance and encouragement to achieve their goals. Coach Taylor Ablitt has exemplified his skills as an experienced coach for eight years. He exhibits sportsmanship and promotes the concepts of fun, fitness, and fundamentals.

Taylor has been head coach of the Special Olympics alpine team in London for the past three seasons. He is very enthusiastic and energetic, providing athletes with all the support and motivation they need. Taylor is patient and constantly searches for ways to assist athletes to attain their goals.

Aside from coaching skiing and softball, Taylor actively participates in a variety of fundraisers. Taylor encourages many of his friends and acquaintances to become involved in Special Olympics. He enjoys recruiting new coaches and being involved with the community. Parents and friends describe Taylor as an individual who is a wonderful advocate and very passionate about his work with Special Olympics.

Taylor always challenges athletes, and provides them with constructive feedback so they may learn from their mistakes. He genuinely cares for them, and not only helps develop their athletic ability, but also works to ensure they grow as

individuals. His caring and passion for the athletes flows into their personal lives, offering help and advice when needed. He offers words of encouragement whenever he can, and always takes the opportunity to build solid connections with his team, earning their trust and respect. He truly displays the coach spirit, both on and off the playing field.

Congratulations Taylor on being presented with the 2017 Male Coach of the Year Award.

PROVINCIAL AWARDS



2017

**EDUCATOR
OF THE YEAR**
Andy Dermatas

Special Olympics programs would not be possible without the volunteers, coaches, and educators who dedicate their time and energy to make sure that they are a success. Andy Dermatas is a shining example of an educator who goes above and beyond to provide the best opportunities, not only for his students but for his community. His dedication to students with special needs resulted in positive changes across the entire Niagara region.

Andy has been an educator for 17 years with the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN). He has ventured through many different roles, but his passion has always brought him back to working with students with special needs. In 2007, Andy

had a vision of offering an event where these students could come together and compete for the love of sport. With colleagues Bryn Keyes and John Haeni, a committee was formed and planning for the first DSBN Special Olympics began. With overwhelming support from senior administration and over 50 volunteers, the first event took place. The smiles on the students' faces and the positive feedback from parents and athletes fuelled Andy's drive to get the word out to all students who would benefit from event. Andy contacted Special Olympics Ontario and the partnership began.

The DSBN Special Olympics has now grown from 200 athletes to over 600 athletes, representing

61 schools from across the Niagara Region, and is supported by more than 150 volunteers. Due to Special Olympics Ontario's endless support, the DSBN track meet has been used as an official provincial qualifier, and many of its athletes have gone on to generic school track competition and the school championships program! The DSBN Special Olympics has positively impacted thousands of amazing athletes and it is extra special for Andy now that his two boys, Dawson and Silas, take part in volunteering as they cheer on the athletes.

Congratulations Andy on being presented with the 2017 Educator of the Year Award.



2017

**VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR**
Jane Larkworthy

Having successful and well-organized games is dependent on the assistance and efforts of devoted and passionate volunteers, who set aside their time to help ensure programs are run smoothly. Jane Larkworthy is a testament to this, having been a dedicated volunteer to the Special Olympics movement for 15 years.

Jane has contributed her expertise in the areas of both sport and administration. One extraordinary contribution she made for the community was obtaining sponsorship from her municipal golf course to allow athletes to host competitions there at reasonable prices. She also arranged for the sharing of costs for delivery of hockey gear

to the provincials. She never fails to take initiative to ensure that programs are run smoothly, and always contributes new ideas at meetings. She constantly strives to improve Special Olympics programs by providing constructive criticism and alternatives to make them stronger.

Jane is an enthusiastic supporter of Special Olympics not just for her hometown, but in her district and for the province, promoting fun, fitness, and fundamentals in everything she does. She stepped up to the plate as community chair for Stratford when others stepped aside, showing her impeccable initiative and leadership skills. She introduced new sports such as bocce,

curling and golf to the Stratford area. She takes on multiple roles to ensure the best for the athletes, supervising everything from finances and fundraising, to finding and supporting volunteers to focus exclusively on athletes. She also recruits new athletes every opportunity she gets. She is well-respected for her character, drive, and work ethic.

Congratulations Jane on being presented with the 2017 Volunteer of the Year Award.



2017

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Duane Carson

There are specific individuals who have become fundamental to the functioning of Special Olympics programs, and to the athletes, volunteers, and their families. Duane Carson is a perfect example of this. He has been involved with Special Olympics for over 35 years, and has contributed in several areas such as sport, marketing/fundraising, administration, and major games.

Duane has been coaching the Newmarket Crest Club since 1981, showing his commitment and dedication. He has attended and led clinics and competitions at many levels, such as mission staff and coach at nationals and provincials. He has also assisted other teams in hosting swim meets.

Duane pushes the athletes to become the best that they can be, and loves teaching them new techniques. He ensures that every athlete receives a word of encouragement, a push when needed, and makes sure even the slightest achievement is celebrated. He is calm, caring, and compassionate with all athletes and their parents, and presents a true sense of sportsmanship and fairness to all athletes in competition.

He has successfully coached several swimmers to provincial and national swim championships, where the athletes achieved outstanding results. He is a role model for others and is well-respected by the community for all his hard work and

commitment. He is keen on improving education and experiences for coaches, volunteers, and athletes, along with ensuring that the quality of sport and fairness of competition is maintained. He was quick to volunteer for this year's polar plunge, and raised over \$2,500 for the cause.

Congratulations Duane on being presented with the 2017 President's Award.



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Special Olympics will celebrate its **50th anniversary from July, 2018 through to June, 2019**, with program celebrations taking place around the world. Canada has an honoured place within the movement, through the work and efforts of Dr. Frank Hayden who pioneered the research and the structure that we now know as Special Olympics. Canada, and specifically Ontario, has been a leader in the development and execution of children and youth programming, with our high-school championships seen as a model amongst developed nations. To that end, Special Olympics Ontario was approached to explore the opportunity of making the **2019 Special Olympics Ontario School Championships an international competition and a pinnacle event of the 50th anniversary celebrations.**





The OHL is a proud partner and team member of the Special Olympics movement. Their endeavors in raising awareness, promoting respect and changing attitudes is empowering and moving. Words cannot describe how grateful we are, especially for the athletes you continue to support!

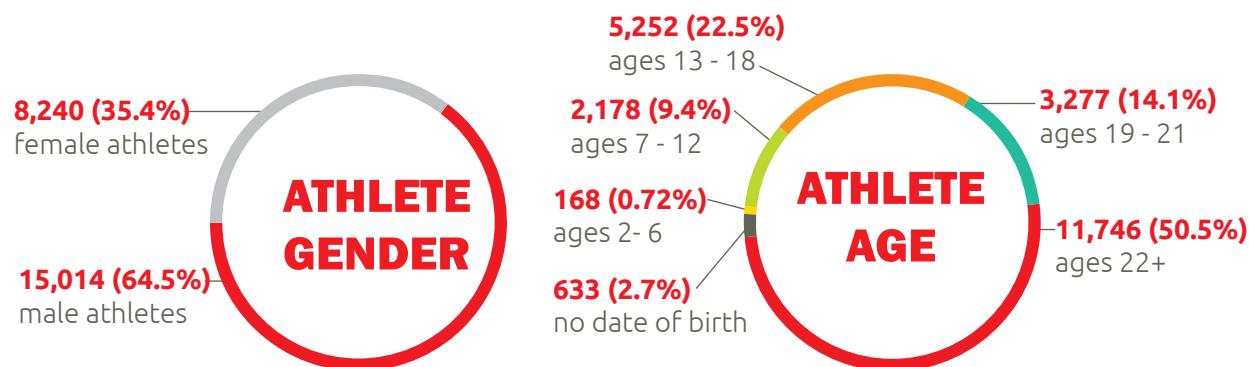


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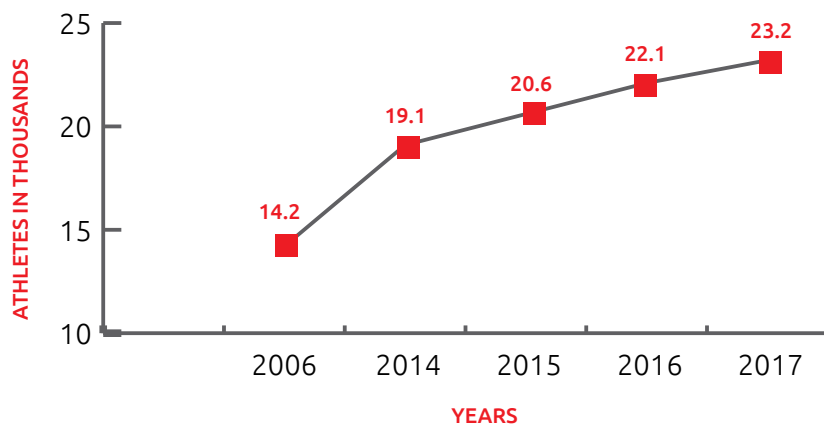
from August / September 2017

ATHLETE NUMBERS & DEMOGRAPHICS

23,254 total individual athletes



ATHLETES CHANGE BY THE YEARS



+63.4%
athlete growth since 2006

SUPPORT
\$8,452,453

an increase of 96% versus
\$4,312,852 in 2010

VOLUNTEERS

10,946 individual volunteers

9,500 coaches

10,000 law enforcement

1,146 volunteers (operational)

PARTICIPATION

59,689 total athlete participation

19,637 total coach participation

4,570 program (operational volunteers)

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

25 sports in ontario

1,105 community clubs **9,998** community athletes

87 youth clubs

2,376 total sports clubs

2,219 athletes in development programs

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

1,271 school clubs

13,254 school athletes


59 school boards

1,141 total schools


LEADERSHIP

460 athlete ambassadors, representatives and volunteers)

395 athletes in leadership roles (High 5 Club)



Empowering and growing confidence is the beginning of a more inclusive and diverse community. A heartfelt thanks to the **Government of Ontario** for supporting Special Olympics Ontario, but also people of all ages and abilities within our community.



**VIBRANT
START**



FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS
POUR OLYMPIQUES SPÉCIAUX

2016 was another record-breaking year for motionball, from the number of events we hosted to the number of young professionals we engaged.

We are proud to have surpassed our \$1M net donation goal once again, and will continue to work hard on making this an annual net donation in the years to come.



motionball is proud to be sponsored nationally by:



a LoyaltyOne
program



2016 In Numbers



18 events



12 cities across
Canada



5,000 Gala
Guests



300 Marathon of
Sport Teams



**\$1,250,000 = 2016 net donation to the
Special Olympics Canada Foundation.**

At motionball's request, 70% of the funds raised from each event, were sent to the affiliated Special Olympics Provincial Chapter.

